



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, TEXAS**

Retiree Versus Department of Veteran Affairs Benefits

Applicable to: Military Personnel

This article provides information relating to Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System identification card eligibility for retired military members. Retirees, who are eligible for retired pay and benefits from the services, may also qualify for disability benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Service Members Entitled to Retired Pay:

There is a lot of confusion concerning the status of service members entitled to retired pay who also qualifies with a rating of 100-percent disabled by the VA for compensation (disability pay) purposes. The key to the member's status for the DEERS program is their entitlement to retired pay, provision of law requiring payments to any person meeting eligibility requirements as established by such law.

Some service members may choose to waive their entitlements to retired pay for tax purposes and elect to receive tax-exempt disability compensation from the VA, however this election has no effect on their service retirement and eligibility to a DD Form 2 Retired (Blue) ID card. The service member's DEERS record of enrollment is verified by the personnel system, reporting the service retirement to DEERS. DEERS will reflect "retired," and allow issuance of the DD Form 2 Retired (Blue) ID card to the eligible member. The DD Form 2 authorizes TRICARE and Military Treatment Facility medical care, commissary, exchange, and Morale, Welfare & Recreation privileges.

Retired service members' eligible family members are also eligible for issuance of the DD Form 1173 (Tan) ID card, reflecting eligibility to TRICARE and Military Treatment Facility medical care, commissary, exchange, and Morale Welfare & Recreation privileges. **Note:** Some military members and family members may have been in receipt of medical benefits by error through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs. When the service member is retired from the military and entitled to retired pay and waived their retired pay to receive tax-exempt disability compensation from the VA, then entitlement to medical care with TRICARE and MTF prevails. In this instance, the service member and family members remain eligible in DEERS for ID cards reflecting "retired" versus 100 percent disabled VA status.

Honorably Discharged Veterans Rated 100 Percent Disabled by the VA (Non-Retirement Eligible):

Honorably discharged veterans who are non-retirement eligible, but separated from the Uniformed Service and not entitled to retired pay, but rated 100 percent disabled from the VA due to a Uniformed Service connected injury or disease, are eligible to a DD Form 2765 (Tan) ID card. Discharged veterans and their family members are eligible for commissary, exchange, and Morale, Welfare & Recreation privileges only. They are not entitled to TRICARE or medical care through the Uniformed Services MTF. However, they receive their medical benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In order to receive the DD Form 2765 or DD 1173, a letter from the VA must certify the veteran is entitled to commissary and exchange privileges. This letter may indicate whether a medical reevaluation is necessary as well. A copy of a DD Form 214, reflecting an honorable discharge is also required. The veteran is enrolled in DEERS as a Disabled American Veteran Temporary, or Disabled Veteran Permanent, based on the letter from the VA. This status is reported electronically to DEERS as "DAVTMP" or "DAVPRM" from the VA or verified by the approval letter the veteran or family member received from the VA.

Note: USD P&R Memorandum, May 7, 2008, *Commissary and Exchange Access by Surviving Spouses and Dependents of Honorable Discharged Veterans Posthumously Determined 100 Percent Disabled* authorizes access to military commissary and exchange shopping privileges for surviving spouses and dependents of honorably discharged veterans who are posthumously determined to have possessed a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent.